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Canada

# Building Canada's food and agriculture brand in the world

Canada's agriculture and food industry feeds the world safe, healthy food that is well-respected by international trading partners. Canada is the world's fourth-largest exporter in the agriculture and seafood trade, and is internationally recognized for high-quality products.

## Ontario's Contribution

Given the province's geographical and climatic range, Ontario produces more than 200 agricultural commodities, a diversity unmatched in most parts of the world. The province is a world leader in food technology research and development and leads the country in food processing from a raw resource to higher-value manufactured products.

The agri-food sector has a proven track record in successful export marketing with exports worth $8.7 billion (2007) annually, and accounts for 24.5 per cent of Canada's total annual agri-food exports.[1] There are as many as 3,500 food processors in Ontario employing almost 120,000 people and contributing more than $32.5 billion to the economy.

The U.S., Mexico and the European Union are Ontario's largest agri-food export markets.

### Agri-Food

Ontario's top agri-food exports in 2008 were grain and grain products, vegetables and red meats. Among the grains, corn, soybean and wheat are Ontario's top crops.

Corn-on-the-cob and popping corn may be the first corn products to come to mind, but corn is a part of many products, including more than 40 types of starches and glucose, glues and pastes, beer, batteries, explosives, wallpaper, textiles, foods such as tacos and yogurt, and cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and dozens of other everyday items.

Tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers, greenhouse-grown in south-western Ontario, are exported to the U.S., so close and accessible by road. Newer tomato varieties have brought a new economy to the industry. Grown vertically, they have higher yields and produce more tomatoes in the same greenhouse area.

The red-meat and meat-products industry includes beef, pork, lamb, rabbit, venison, bison and other livestock that are processed according to stringent provincial and federal meat inspection and enforcement systems. In Ontario's multi-ethnic society, many foods are Kosher or Halal. The rich variety of meat products comprise fresh or frozen meat, and processed, smoked, canned and cooked meats, as well as sausage and deli meats.

### Did you know?

The most southerly points of south-western Ontario's Essex County touch the same latitude as northern California and Tuscany. This is Canada's Sun Parlour. The region claims to receive more hours of sunshine than any part of the country. Not surprisingly, the county is home to Canada's most intensive and valuable greenhouse vegetable production with 445 hectares under glass, just more than 50 per cent of all Canadian greenhouse space.

[1] Ontario. Invest in Ontario. Overview of Ontario's Food Processing Industry. http://new.2ontario.com/food/Overview.asp

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